

IDM IBSSS Process and Timeline

- I. UNI's Institute for Decision Making (IDM) met with Vinton's IBSSS executive team on December 21, 2016 to outline the vision process, identify roles and responsibilities of Vision Team members, and to tour the facility. IDM worked with Chris Ward-Vinton City Administrator, Emily Upah-Benton Development Group and Melissa Schwan-Vinton Unlimited to recruit a diverse cross-section of 20-25 residents to be Vision Team members. The purpose of the Vision Team is to make recommendations to Vinton's City Council on whether to assume ownership of the IBSSS facility based upon public input and the Team's own analysis.
- II. IDM conducted an initial visioning session with the Team on February 28, 2017. During the session, participants reviewed examples of potential uses for the property and identified new uses for the space. The Team members individually selected uses they believe are high priorities. These uses included housing, education, government services (including AmeriCorps), entrepreneurship development, tourism, indoor / outdoor recreation, arts and culture, and business. The team identified that there were multiple sub categories for each potential use. The team prioritized the potential uses (housing, government services complex, indoor/outdoor recreation, tourism, education and business) and agreed to present them to the community for public input.
- III. IDM worked with Vinton's executive team to hold Vinton's Community Idea and Input Expo at the Vinton Shellsburg High School on April 5, 2017. Over 125 community members attended this event to learn about the potential uses identified by the Visioning Team and best practices in adaptive reuse from other communities (in Iowa and nationally). Attendees also provided feedback, shared their own ideas, and raised questions or concern that they believe need to be addressed. At the time of this update (April 6, 2017), the specific comments have yet to be tabulated. However, it is clear that a large percentage believe reuse of the IBSSS facility is very important to the community of Vinton.
- IV. The Visioning Team reconvened on May 2, 2017 to review the public input and to outline draft recommendations to the City Council. The City Council will then develop its response to the Board of Regents.



Vinton Visioning Team

UNI's Institute for Decision Making (IDM) met with Vinton's IBSSS Visioning Team on May 2nd to review the public input received during the April 5th Community Input Expo and to discuss initial recommendations to the City Council. Drew Conrad, CECD, CCR, Director of UNI's Institute for Decision Making, kicked off the session by welcoming the team, reviewing the purpose of the meeting, the agreed upon operating principles and the overall visioning process to date. Drew noted the goal of the meeting was for the Visioning Team to draft a series of recommendations and considerations for the City Council. At this point, a recommendation still does not require a clearly identified source of funding or a need for collaboration and/or partnership.

IDM Program Manager James Hoelscher, CECD led the Team through a review of the April 5th Expo, including feedback from each of the table hosts and Expo attendees (**Attachments A and B**). While Team members agreed that while some community members, who do not subscribe to a newspaper or access local news online, may not have known about the event, the event did provide the community with an open and inviting forum to gain information and to share feedback. All agreed that most feedback was very positive and that community members expressed appreciation for the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process.

The Team affirmed that they felt good about the public input process and had adequate levels of input and feedback to move forward in the visioning process. James and Team members agreed that the exit surveys reflect the ability of the IBSSS facility to accommodate multiple uses of the property. While housing, tourism and government services received the highest number of votes for top uses, the other three categories (business, education and indoor/outdoor recreation) seem to be complimentary uses. James also pointed out that the attendees reported an average score of 4.52 (Scale: 1 = not at all important to 5 = extremely important) on how important the IBSSS facility is to the community of Vinton.

Next, the Team engaged in an extensive discussion on the scope and extent of the recommendations that would ultimately be submitted to the City Council. IDM offered a draft continuum of options the Team could recommend ranging from "Doing Nothing" to "Assuming Full Ownership." During the discussion, several members of the Team pointed out that the decision is first "Yes" or "No" vote as to whether the City should enter into discussions or negotiations with the Board of Regents and the State of Iowa regarding ownership of the IBSSS facility. The Team unanimously voted "Yes" (25 votes) the City should move forward with discussions or negotiations.

Vinton Visioning Team 2017 Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School

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Brad Barker
Brittany Bathke
Bud Maynard
Chris Ward
Dave Vermedahl
Dave Wessling
Drew Sallee
Emily Upah
Eric Dickinson
Greg Walston
Jeff Peterson
Julie Piper
Kasey Keeling
Kathy VanSteenhyse
Kurt Karr
Larry Drushel
Linda Fisher
Margie Ortgiesen
Mark Mossman
Mary Jo Hainstock
Melissa Schwan
Mike Elwick
Mike Reige
Pat Baird
Rich Hainstock
Rick Primmer
Ted Jessen
Tom Richtsmeier
Virginia Holsten
Will Ketchen

The Team then focused on what conditions and desires they felt should be included as part of their recommendation to the City Council. After much deliberation, the Team came to an agreement that “Yes” reflects that the City would work towards assuming full-ownership of the Iowa Braille Site Saving School. It also means that the City of Vinton shall or will work to form development partnerships and collaborations with the public and private sectors. However, the Team also pointed out that even with a “Yes” recommendation, the City of Vinton could “walk away” from the discussions or negotiations if City officials felt they would negatively impact the City or the community of Vinton.

Next, the Team outlined several recommendations for local action, as well as requests and conditions the City Council should consider presenting back to the Iowa Board of Regents and State of Iowa prior to signing agreements or contracts.

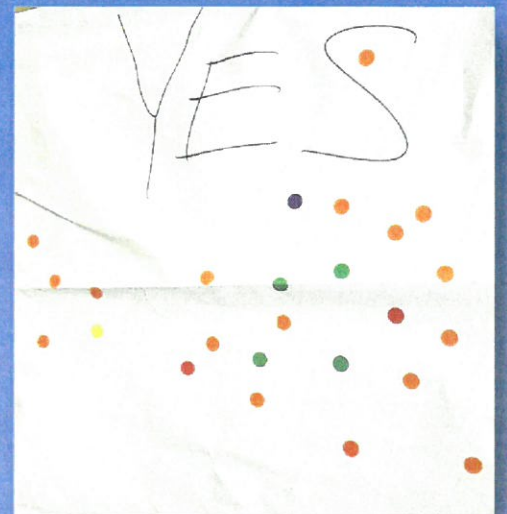
The following are the Team’s recommendations to the City Council:

- A. Appoint a small committee, or “commission” of community volunteers to oversee the development of the IBSSS on behalf of the City of Vinton and would regularly report back to the City Council
- B. Request that the Board of Regents conduct a detailed feasibility study of the proposed uses of the facility, e.g. housing, tourism and government services
- C. Request that the Board of Regent and/or State of Iowa maintain the property up and to the transition of ownership
- D. Request that an inspection of the property be done by an impartial third party – paid for by the Iowa Board of Regents
- E. Conduct an extensive site visit with local and area government entities that will be asked to consider relocating to the IBSSS to explore interest, needs, possibility and feasibility
- F. Request the inclusion of a City of Vinton representative “at the table” when the Iowa Board of Regents is negotiating contracts with AmeriCorps or any other prospective tenants
- G. Request the State of Iowa’s assistance in recruiting statewide and national departments, agencies and resources for exploring uses, collaborations, funding opportunities, and best practices, e.g. Iowa State Historical Society, Iowa Travel Federation, Main Street Iowa, Iowa Finance Authority, Travel Iowa, Smithsonian Institute etc.
(Attachment C)
- H. Request funding from the Iowa Board of Regents or State of Iowa for project administration, marketing, facility improvements etc.
- I. Include some form of escape or emergency clauses into final contracts that would allow the City of Vinton to return ownership to the State of Iowa within a specified period of time

Vinton Community Idea and Input Expo Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School April 5, 2017



Recommendation to City Council May 02, 2017



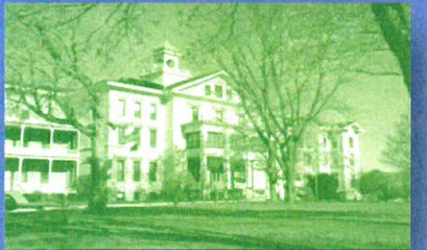
The session concluded with Drew and James explaining that representatives from the Visioning Team should appear at an upcoming City Council meeting and present the Team's recommendations. City Staff (Chris Ward) or the economic developers (Emily Upah and Melissa Schwan) on the Team should not make the presentation. Drew and James noted the importance of all Team members attending that meeting even though only two or three may actually make the presentation to the City Council.

Finally, Drew and James thanked the Team members for their hard work, dedication and commitment to Vinton. On behalf of IDM, they complimented the Team on their concern, vision, and diligence in addressing an issue very important to the past, present and future of Vinton.

Highest Ranked Reuses

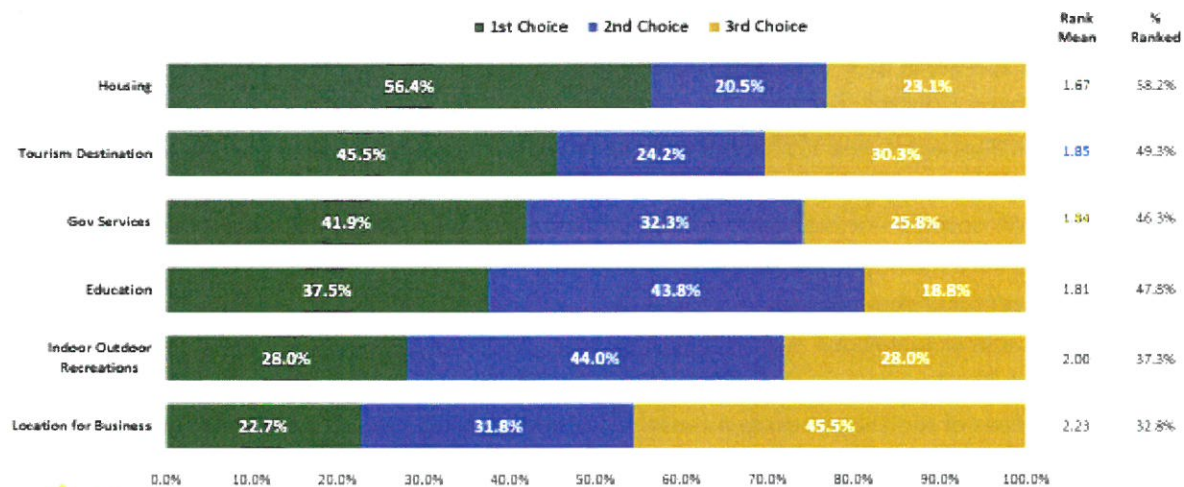
- ✓ Housing
- ✓ Tourism
- ✓ Government Services

Multiple other uses would complement these anchor uses of the property

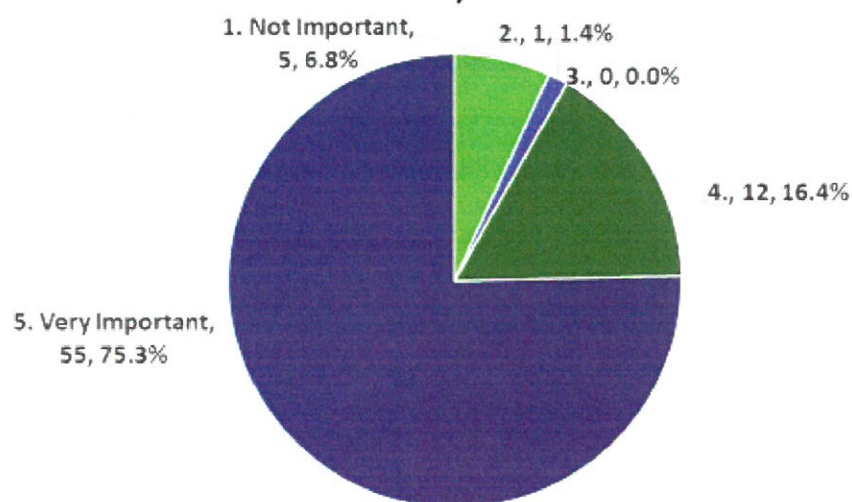


IBSSS Community Idea Expo Exit Survey

Ranking Top 3 Choices for Best Use



How important is IBSSS facility and grounds to the community of Vinton



IBSSS Community Idea Expo

Attendee Feedback Card Comments

Location for Business

Ideas and Suggestions:

- Brew Pub, States Wine, Entertainment
- Get it on the National Registry of Historic Places! ASAP Even though we have been turned down two times!
- Develop west side of property on 218 between 13th and 9th for new business area. (vs. trying to redevelop 218 north of 9th) Revenue from sale of property, revenue from property taxes and business taxes, privately funded
- A theme restaurant in one of the buildings to tie in w/ Braille School history. Specialty shops, tourism destination-Old Maine 1860s, Coffee shop??
- Rehab or VA hospital – It is already mostly ADA compliant. Don't know how we'd attract it. Elderly day care – I may need it! ☺
- Microbrewery and steak house
- Multi business or law firm
- Outlet mall, like Tanger
- I like the ideas of multi businesses on main level and housing above. "Mini mall" type businesses.
- My favorite idea-having a "village" type campus with shops, restaurants, brewery/winery and more. Using part of campus for apts. or condos and nice outdoor park space. Maintain Old Main!
- We need a top-notch restaurant in this town. The old hospital building would make a great café!
- I like the idea of good quality restaurants, brewery, etc. Somewhere nice to go out but still affordable. Possible shops (again affordable). Maybe condos on upper levels to attract young couples.
- Use the barn as a convention and reception center with the dorms used for upstairs condos and the first floor as strip malls.
- Business-have an antiques store in Old Main

Questions and Concerns

- I didn't feel we could support the village like Traverse City, MI. has. Maybe a scaled back version of this. It would be great to have a few small businesses start up
- Getting new businesses is a great idea to put in the buildings. We have to look out for our downtown too!
- Don't sacrifice downtown business to fill this facility
- Would business park concept hurt downtown businesses?
- Downtown has places available for businesses already

- Where are we at with IVinton? Do we have adequate phone/internet capabilities to attract businesses? And if so, why haven't we already?
- I think even if you do get some businesses up here is that enough to pay for the maintenance.
- Adequate parking that doesn't destroy campus beauty
- How long have these businesses stayed in their locations – turnover of them due to economic conditions etc.?
- Where does the money come from for renovation?
- Remember there are 15 OTHER buildings!

Tourism Destination

Ideas and Suggestions:

- Love the Pioneer Village idea! [could not decipher most of remaining comments. Please refer back to the first two cards labeled "10f2 and "2of2."]
- Historical complex
- In Florida, Captiva Island, the library had a small museum about the island – maybe 15x20 feet with 4 screens, each with "buttons" for three or four short "movies" on topics about the people, the history, etc. and artifacts, - it looked like the inside of a ship. All self-explanatory. Just audio speakers could have earphones too – this one didn't
- Tours of IBSSS for local people to see campus!
- Keep Old Main – museum is a tour destination. Other spaces can find administration Possibilities and keep the Founder's Room and Alumni Office!
- First floor – Old Main entire museum of archives
- This is a perfect facility for tourism. We have increased traffic currently with bus tours – just think what we could do if it were expanded—like the village idea!
- Google "Me Menamins." They convert old schools into tourist destinations and preserve the history of the property, and create jobs!!!
- A rentable community kitchen has been talked about
- Benton County historical society ought to store their archives in a more climate-controlled place—they could use space in Old Main – (Worridge House = not my favorite property anyway)
- Keep Old Main—historic significance – similar to Old Capital. Use other buildings for housing, businesses or anything that will support Old Main
- Use the old barn for the brewery idea.
- Agree. Keep "Old Main" if at all possible
- Move property in park to Braille School site incorporate buildings into the celebration—especially if housing fine arts/museum. I like this idea!
- Historical: please preserve the history of the Braille School and the Museum. The Mary Ingalls Society has brought awareness and tourism to our community. Don't get rid of this!
- Keep Old Main at all cost
- Expand the museum to make it national
- This is the perfect place to draw people to our area. With a few additional ideas we could really make a big step forward

- Old Main needs to be preserved as historical monument – like the idea of concert events. Even 900 people through school last year. About 700 scheduled for this year
- Preserving Old Main important as well as its history. Love the “idea/concept” of tourism destination—but would take a lot of sincere effort, \$ and promotion to drive the continued traffic to support it
- Banquet facility
- Keep Old Main for its historic value but use it for not only historical tourism – like idea of brewery/winery – bike trail tie in?
- Retain Old Main!!
- Please retain Old Main! Too valuable to lose

Questions and Concerns

- How long before tourism fizzles out? Then what?
- Suggestion of reception facility seems like it is competition for existing places like VCC, skating rink, wildcat, etc.
- Please no brewery. No wine
- Avoid housing lots

Education

Ideas and Suggestions:

- A charter school for Benton County. Maybe drama/theater emphasis?
- Education-Good ideas- Kaplan good idea. Student run businesses good possibilities.
- For profit private school
- A private school for the blind
- A Christian private school. Contact Benton County’s Lutheran School
- Like the college idea or private school
- Vocational/trade school good idea. Diesel mechanics, automotive, electronics, diagnostics.
- Multi-use: housing, museum, keep the tourism par, government offices, alternative high school, recreation facilities (pool), craft brewery
- This is the only [option] that makes sense
- Use as possible trade school for linemen like Sheldon, or wind turbine maintenance mechanic.
- State wide history center where students from entire state. A history retreat for students of all ages to re-instill the interest of history. Not to compete with state history but a fresh idea.
- You could combine all 3 ideas together
- Small college could use as a satellite campus. But my preference is to use the whole complex as housing – appts., condos, lots
- There is going to be a desperate need for skilled trade workers in our future. Having a vocational training school is a good idea
- Education is a perfect fit. History is the subject that has taken the biggest hit in the last generation. How about a history college or school? Bring every student in the state here for a couple days to get a basic intro in one of the state’s premier historic sites
- Kirkwood regional facility or college – even a junior college. Leave Old Main for museum and admin. Offices! Technical school – great idea!

- Really like the idea of a college. It would help all areas of our community without compromising current businesses. It would help them to grow. Also think the vocational training idea is essential in today's world
- Kirkwood could set up some trade schools here
- Close Shellsburg school system buy the buildings (so they have their own pool). Move administrative offices there. Add woods/Shop. Daycare. Space for elderly day care. Add more trade based training for students – metal, woods, electrical
- Like the vocation college idea. Prefer they live on campus and work real “job” type training.
- Education: We don't need pre-school or childcare space. A national braille or visually impaired museum or guide dog training would be awesome

Questions and Concerns

- Taxpayers would foot a significant portion of the bill for maintenance. To rely on supplementing with donations – fundraisers of top of the above will be burdensome beyond belief
- Concern is the money and the taxes on my house here in town. Daycare is an expensive option for young families to afford. Already have problems staffing and funding existing facilities

Indoor Outdoor Recreation

Ideas and Suggestions:

- Put the splash pad in the middle of the existing track
- Yes! Upgrade the pool and rec area for all citizens (community center)
- Pool-gym-track has unlimited potential – especially for our older residents
- New aquatic center and/or recreation center. I like the idea (but \$)
- Want use as recreation area. Need to make income producing site. Senior living, condos, lots for building
- Pool and Rec. building could be utilized 24/7. Current users are girls' H.S. swim team, Boys' H.S. swim team, lap swim, lifeguard training, adult water aerobics, aquatic club swim team, braille school swim team and VPR recreation swims for the pool. For the gym, the schools and youth teams use it all the time. Proper scheduling could increase the use of both areas for water activities and gym use could be expanded. Cost for usage would help pay for maintenance.
- The recreation building could offer a lot of opportunities for year round recreation programs.
- Multi-use trail
- Create a destination style recreation complex that must be cost sustainable
- Like the Children's Museum—would need to keep it with Old Main and make it a destination for families
- How about archery?
- Put the re-located ball fields (2-miner and Kiwanis) over the geothermal area and south of superintendent's house
- Spa retreat training for future massage therapists, etc.
- Spa retreat

Questions and Concerns

- I don't think you could draw in enough people to pay the initial cost
- A community sports complex would be nice—but not sure people would use it

Government Services Complex

Ideas and Suggestions:

- Keep AmeriCorps!!!
- Work hard to keep AmeriCorps if possible. Consider consolidating governmental services into Old Main
- Hope that AmeriCorps can stay but know that is always questionable. Would like if they could use outbuilding like dorms and have Old Main and Rec Building for Vinton's use – city offices, tourism, etc.
- Leave Old Main for museum and as a tour destination. That history of Iowa Braille – this building cannot be replicate! Keep AmeriCorps and FemaCorps! Old main dates to the 1860s!
- Use Old Main for City Hall offices, police and other city offices. Keep AmeriCorps for the rest Detention facility next to a highway? Will the city build a wall around it?
- A big concern for fire dept. and ambulance is the railroad – a viaduct or underpass needs to be put in somewhere to allow access to both sides of the town
- Government services complex – I like this idea with multiple uses
- Vinton has a strong need to move its emergency services – fires station in particular – this makes good sense to have these services in a combined campus – but should all the eggs be in one basket for security sake? We have a more immediate need for housing and business growth
- Gov't services complex. Mental health. Minimum detention facility. Half-way House. Let gov't pay for upkeep of property
- Add some services for veterans
- Locating a lot of city services here could get some away from the flood zone. Does city rent any of the current spaces? There could be some savings there
- FEMA funding? Flood Prevention?
- Love the idea of moving all emergency services to one location. If this is done the old city hall/police would make a great welcome center for the town!
- Fire/ambulance-yes. VMEV there are better places. Minimum detention would work.
- Need housing! Priority! All except low income. Could have senior living with amenities. Develop empty land, use existing facilities that are available
- It's the 2nd oldest building in the state – We need to keep it! (it's historical)
- Leave Old Main alone!! The other structures would be excellent for a need Fire/police/emergency/ facilities
- Keep a spot for Mary Ingalls
- Really appreciate the AmeriCorps being there. Wish that they would stay here
- Existing fiber optic hub would make a good location to launch the telecom utility and bring giber to all of Vinton
- It would be great to have a social rental space for receptions and events. We need a little more class in Vinton!
- Western most building for fire and ambulance. Building is already set up for rescue. Good use of facility

Questions and Concerns

- Excellent idea to leverage FEMA buyout to consolidate city services—however new facilities should be used that are tailored to those services (not a forced repurposing to save existing facilities)
- Needs to be more than government. Keep Old Main and expand to draw people to Vinton

Housing

Ideas and Suggestions:

- Like the condo/combo business idea. Brewpub/wine with restaurant. Nice park/outdoor space. Shops/art/museum-retaining Old Main. Something that draws people and generates local revenue
- Possible use Main building – office space. Call center for businesses to come to town
- Senior housing a good idea. Make it a nice facility like Friendship Village in Waterloo
- I would like to see a master plan to develop the whole 43A with housing at all levels, retail, recreation, and urgent-care. Make it a draw from other communities to “the city of lights.”
- I think housing is important. Veterans, elderly whatever!
- Housing – particularly low income
- Veterans use sounds like a good idea
- Virginia Gay Hospital owned Assisted Care. Located N. of Lions Field. All present assisted care facilities have waiting lists. Could bring other family members to the community
- Move Kiwanis Park over beside track. Develop and sell off lots in present day Kiwanis Park
- I like the idea of relocating the park and then selling the land the current park sits on for housing lots
- Keep the Braille School! Vinton is desperate for housing – nearby communities have lots being offered which will allow for growth. If people can’t find places to live here, they’ll go elsewhere! Will lower school attendance, will lower funding, will lower our educational standard! Apartments/condos, assorted types, except low income!
- Apartments or condos in Old Main or constructed on IBSSS land. Develop open land for single family housing or commercial use
- Keep Old Main at least. Use for housing! Vinton is desperate for it. Develop green space for lots.
- I like the current suggestions. They make sense
- Senior housing. Apartments
- Condos, Brewpub/restaurant, recreation facilities. (all in one complex)
- Affordable housing for Seniors/disabled
- Make Palmen Hall into a senior citizens housing
- Use dorms for retirement housing
- Hotel

Questions and Concerns

- Old Main must be preserved and place on the National Historical Register. The Mary Ingalls Society has been diligently working to sort and preserve artifacts for the future. The building is attracting attention via bus tours and many positive comments come out of these groups
- Biggest concern—cost, cost, cost to our citizens

- Low-income housing is great except there is no cost to them. Therefore no reason to take care of them
- Appear that all of the examples are government funded. Housing on the surface sounds great but at what cost to the taxpayer with restrictions on who you can rent to
- Prefer to not concentrate on low-income housing
- Has anyone checked the boiler systems, the pool filters, etc. Water/sewer systems, maintenance cost of mowing, etc... What insurance cost?
- Do not like the idea of single-family dwellings on this site
- Keep AmeriCorps! After their one year is done!
- Vinton would need to have a significant economic development to draw a population of people to fill these apartments. Otherwise, they'll sit empty – still creates a problem.
- Never demolish Old Main
- How well the city really afford to run it if the state can't. You could not even put apartments in. they won't meet codes

Other

- I'm glad we have the opportunity to consider such a campus. However, when I drive through Vinton and see the number of buildings-example (West school, café 218, east)-and the condition of our streets and parks, I can't imagine taking on another project of this magnitude. If we don't have the money to fix up and repair the things we already own or need to condemn, why would we take on more expense at the citizens expense? My only option would be a private company or college to take on the expense of this campus and bring something good and profitable for the city.
- We need to attract young people to live in Vinton. Vinton has everything you have to have and the rest a few minutes away
- Here's a crazy idea—Combine some of these excellent ideas together. For example—student run businesses, indoor/outdoor rec., individual businesses, keep pool as option for schools.
- Many good ideas. Any or all have potential. We need to keep the facility for future development. Thanks for excellent presentation
- I believe the "parts" are greater than the whole. Each building should be looked at singly for potential standalone use. Looking at only the "whole" eliminates the possibility of multiple partners sharing the risks and the diversity "parts thinking" might provide
- Focus on: Partnerships—developers, builders, housing authority
- There are many good ideas—please do something instead of saying no to everything. This is a great community and together we can make it even better!
- G—all of the above
- It would be helpful to have an open house at the Braille School. Many folks have never seen the inside and all it has to offer

Possible “Blue Ribbon” Advisory Council

- AmeriCorps
- Main Street Iowa
- Iowa Economic Development Authority and Travel Iowa
- East Central Iowa Council of Governments
- Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs
- State Historical Society and Museum
- Iowa Children’s Museum
- Iowa Finance Authority
- State of Iowa Department for the Blind
- US Economic Development Administration
- Farm Bureau-Renew Rural Iowa
- Iowa Rural Development Council
- USDA-Rural Development
- University of Iowa – Facilities Management-Building and Landscape Services
- University of Iowa – Research and Economic Development
- University of Iowa-Museum of Art
- University of Iowa-Museum Studies Program
- University of Iowa-Marketing Institute
- University of Iowa-Small Business Development Center
- Iowa State University-Community and Economic Development
- Iowa State University-College of Design-Landscape Architecture
- Iowa State University-Facilities Planning and Management
- University of Northern Iowa – Business and Community Services
- University of Northern Iowa – Facilities Planning
- University of Northern Iowa-Grounds Services
- University of Northern Iowa-School of Allied Health and Human Services (for indoor/outdoor rec)
- Western Home Communities
- Kirkwood Community College



